

All military combat veterans who are military medically retired from combat related disabilities and have been awarded the Purple Heart should be exempt from the requirement of 20 years of service in order to be entitled to their prorated military retirement pay.

America's disabled combat veterans gave their all for us and should not be penalized just because they are receiving compensation from the VA. While many disabled veterans go on to enjoy happy productive lives, many are unable to due to the severity of their wounds.

Under any doctrine of fairness it is our moral obligation to "care for him who shall have borne the battle." This bill is a good step in correcting the inequity of retirement and disability benefit to our combat disabled veterans.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mr. NORWOOD. Madam Speaker, on roll call No. 6; on adoption of Title I of the Resolution, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER D. ROBERTS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher D. Roberts, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Christopher has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Christopher has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher D. Roberts for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Christopher in the United States House of Representatives.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL MENTORING ACT

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution recognizing and honoring those who make a difference in the lives of our young people across the United States.

This January marks National Mentoring Month as proclaimed by the President of the

United States. It is a month-long celebration honoring those who are mentors and drawing attention to the great need for more mentors.

Mentors make a tremendous difference in the lives of our children. When a responsible and reliable adult becomes a mentor, the benefits to the mentee can last a lifetime. Countless stories show the great benefits of a good role model.

Chris Moran became a mentor to Joshua Becerra in my hometown of San Diego through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program when he was just 9 years old in 1999. Chris and Joshua have gotten together on a weekly basis ever since for horseback riding, chess, and other activities. The relationship has been meaningful for both.

Spending time with a young person gave Chris a healthier perspective on what is important in life—helping others, he said. Joshua, now a student at San Diego's High Tech High, is looking forward to attending college and has already visited UCLA, San Diego State University, and other campuses trying to decide where to apply. Joshua attributes his academic success in large part to his mentor.

Joshua plans to study music when he goes on to college and would like to become a professional musician. Chris is helping him locate a college with an excellent music program.

These types of relationships between reliable adults and our young people are invaluable. Millions of adults nationwide are acting as excellent role models while providing guidance and advice to our young people—many of whom face problems at home or difficulties at school. Without a good, solid role model, our kids are more likely to drop out of high school or to become involved with drugs or alcohol.

Madam Speaker, this resolution honors and recognizes the adults across the United States who are mentors to our young people. This resolution also calls on more adults to become mentors to those in need.

Unfortunately, research shows that about 15 million children across the United States are in need of a mentor and a good role model. It is crucial that we begin to reach these children.

Finally, this resolution highlights the need to support programs that teach our young people about mentoring and the need to become involved. There are programs, for example, that encourage high school students to become mentors to younger children. These types of programs will teach the great benefits of mentoring at a young age and result in adults becoming mentors later—creating a "cycle" of mentoring.

Madam Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity to offer a resolution honoring America's mentors on the occasion of National Mentoring Month 2007.

INTRODUCTION OF KIDSAVE

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, commentators on the political left and right agree about one thing: There are too many political disagreements in Washington, D.C. Of course, the best way to change that would be for those of us who are lawmakers to find

common ground and begin passing legislation that virtually everyone can agree on.

Where to begin? How about with a program that has the support of moderates, liberals, and even the conservative Heritage Foundation? That program is KidSave.

This common-sense program would allow every American child—regardless of parental income—to save up tens of thousands of dollars for retirement.

KidSave is fairly simple. If it was in effect today, at birth every child would receive a loan of \$2,000 from the Social Security Administration. The initial amount would be linked to inflation, so it would increase slightly year to year. The money would be deposited into an account that couldn't be opened until the owner retires or dies.

This account would be managed by the Thrift Savings Plan, the same plan that federal employees—including those of us in Congress—use to manage our retirement funds. Right now there are three low risk, low-cost options offered through the TSP: A government-bond fund, a corporate-bond fund and a stock index fund.

The child's parents would decide which fund to deposit the initial investment in, and it would grow untapped for decades and decades. According to a study by the Heritage Foundation, the opportunity for growth is so great that, even if no money was ever added to the initial investment, that loan could still grow to \$50,000 by the time the child reached retirement age.

Parents and grandparents also could contribute additional money tax-free. They could add as much as \$500 per year every year until the child turned 19, and that money could be diverted from their own retirement plans. That's an additional \$9,500, all of it being compounded year after year until retirement.

This is one of those rare Washington programs with the power to change everyone's outlook for the better.

Wealthy people have long taken advantage of long-term investments—indeed, families such as the Rockefellers and Vanderbilts have lived for decades off the money earned by their forefathers. Today, thousands of middle-class grandparents are opening education accounts for their newborn grandchildren.

But KidSave would allow all children to enjoy the benefits of compound interest. Imagine an entire generation of working-class senior citizens with tens of thousands of dollars to spend as they wish. They'd be virtually guaranteed a secure retirement and could spend their newfound wealth on themselves or share it with their children and grandchildren.

A portion of this money would be passed from generation to generation, either as gifts to grandchildren or through donations to churches or community groups. That would help build a more secure future for generations to come.

Best of all, KidSave is a loan from Social Security, not a gift or a new government entitlement. That's one reason it enjoys such broad support. And it doesn't end up costing taxpayers anything. When the account owner reaches age 30—an age at which most people are well along in their working lives—the original loan would be repaid in five annual installments. The repayment amount would be linked to inflation, so an initial \$2,000 loan would be returned to the government as, say, \$3,500.